Harold Weisberg
Route 8, Frederick, Md. 21701
2/25/73

Mr. A.L.Wirin,
Los Angeles, Calif,

Dear Al,

A voice from the past, after 36 1/2 years!

Intermittently over these years I've kept up with your career of dedication to the things in which as younger men we shared interest through not infrequent reporting of it in the Washington Post. I've been in L.A. about three times since the end of 1966, but went at such a pace the younger ones with whom I worked couldn't keep up with me and worked in shifts. Thus, despite a desire to, I was never able to look you up.

Except for some years in semi-retirement as a farmer, forced in part by the relentlessness of the Hill reactionaries who never forgave me for getting a Dies agent indicted and convicted, I've been more or less the kind of activist we both were. Would it sound familiar were I to say "RCA"?

My recent work has made the same kinds of enemies for me, this time in the executive branch, plus a few supposedly friendly. I write about one of these. My recent work is not generally understood and is often misunderstood. It is, in my not impartial view, the most thoroughgoing exposure of the abuses and improper methods of the FBI yet. My knowledge of the literature goes back to Max Lowenthal, whose friend I was. Thus I have been the subject of their interest, as I can prove only by the kinds of witnesses I would not take to court, and of the CIA's, where I have <u>carbons</u> of their surveillance on me. Both are uptight because in my investigations and in my writings I have not made Warren the villain of the whitewashing of the investigation of the JFK assassination, have focused on Hoover <u>personally</u> and the FBI in the most intimate detail, and have brought to light less than I now have about Oswald's intelligence connections. In the latter connection, there is a prima facie case of E. Howard Hunt's adverse intercession when, in 1965, I had made arrangements for chapter use of my first book by The Saturday Evening Post. All of Hunt's past has not yet been exposed. He was in domestic intelligence, too.

I can't tell you how many thousands of pages of FBI reports I have (all properly), but there are more than two thousand I have not yet had a chance to read. One of the great disappointments of the work I've done and alone still do of those with original interest, is that no university has realize the value of what I have as an unofficial archive. My investigations of the FBI have led me to sue it with success. I got a summary judgement in one of the early Freedom of Information suits. (I tried without success to interest the ACLU in such suits, as soon as the law was passed and about four years later, before I filed the first of these suits.)I have what will undoubtedly be precedent on the investigatory files exemption before the DC court of appeals now, with decision long overdue. That I have them dead to rights and should win does not mean I'll prevail when this case gets to the Supreme Court, as one way or another it will. When that happens the retired lawyer in you may be interested in this situation: Rehnquist was part of the early stages when he was in D.J. and I filed a statement against Powell when his nomination was being considered by the Judiciary committee.

Anyway, as I pressed my investigation of the FBI in its role in the assassination investigation, beginning in 1966 I started to publish FBI reports in facsimile. Also a smaller number of those of the Secret Service. In my third book, which dates to May, 1967, there was an appendix of about 150 pages, mostly FBI materials, some with Hoover's signature. There was more pressure against this book than any other.

Others in the field preferred maniacal generalities unsupported by proofs of any kind and generally their own inventions. For the less responsible elements of the minor press, this made them attractive and when I insisted on saying only what seemed reasonably supported and would not be party to such improvisations presented as unquestionable truth, I became unattractive. One example is the LA Free Press. It went gung ho! for Garrison. If it ever mentioned my name, I am unaware of it. Art Kunkin asked for an interview

and didn t keep the date. He also asked for copies of the book with all the FBI reports printed in facsimile for his bookstore. He never advertised them and never paid me for them. He did acknowledge receipt of them, copy enclosed. I have written him whenever my desparate financial situation got even worse, but he has not responded. If I don't know why, I know he is addicted to Garrison and must have heard from Garrison what that ambulatory tragedy thinks of me.

There is and has been very little responsible criticism of the Warren Commission. Among those who are not responsible, those who are are at least unpopular. Against me the presumees have been so heavy I think almost anyone would wonder if I'm paranoid.

It is easier for me to understand the crookedness of commercial elements in publishing than that of the Freep people. A California wholesaler, for example, ordered a thousand copies of the book with all the FBI reports in it, asked that I make up a flyer for him with selections in facsimile for a special mailing to his customers (cost to me about $300) then never mailed it out and never distributed any copies of that book. And, never paid for them, either.

(If as I presume you are not familiar with the field, I had to be my own publisher. At the outset no publisher would touch the subject and once I invented the underground book, me I was unwelcome among established publishers.)

The nuttier they are, the more welcome those who criticize the Warren Commission are among the Rankins. A recent example is an eminent pathologist who has flipped his lid on the subject and done an enormous disservice without contributing anything to what was known. This is what is referred to in my unanswered letter of 1/15/75 to Art Kunkin, also enclosed.

Whether or not what the Freep did is plagiarism within the meaning of the law I don't know. I am not a lawyer. It is in fact if not in law. If it is legally plagiarism I don t know if anything can be done about it. Broke as I am, there is not much I can do about anything.

However, the books they bought and didn t pay for plus the interest I have actually paid on this money, a relatively small sum but significant to me today, is important to me today. Would you be kind enough to forget that you are retired, give them a call asking them to pay me the approximately $107.50, which includes interest at 7 1/2%, what I pay? Even if the statute has run, they still might pay.

Whether or not you get to Washington I, of course, do not know. But if you do, while our accomodations are not de luxe, you might like them more than a fancy hotel. We are an hour out of town, part-way up the first of the mountains to the northwest. We live in a woods, with wild animals whose appearances are not predictable, in relative isolation and privacy. And swimming 40 feet from the house when weather permits.

Thanks for anything you can do for me. And for all the truly fine things you have done over the years.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg